

# Summary of DFE National Lockdown Guidance for Schools

7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

This remains much the same as the current guidance, with the following additional or new pieces of information for your attention:

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## Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Children and Staff

Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils are advised not to attend school during this period of restrictions. Clinically extremely vulnerable staff members are advised to work from home and follow the published guidance. These individuals will have received a letter or advice from a medical professional.

Clinically vulnerable (not extremely) staff can continue to attend school where it is not possible to work from home. People who live with those who are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable can attend school/work.

## Critical Workers

The guidance states that children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required. This includes parents who may be working from home and attendance should not be limited for these children. The guidance also states that parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.

Our suggested advice is that it is reasonable to ask if critical worker parents can keep children at home, but schools should not assume that those working from home can definitely keep children at home. Schools should also not be using a rule that both parents

need to be critical workers in order to be eligible for onsite provision. We appreciate that this is resulting in more children being on-site than in the first lockdown period.

The offer can be tailored to suit the needs of your school community such as implementing a part time rota for those families who can keep children at home for some of the week. Please contact your School Effectiveness Partner if you would like support with this.

Continue to update your risk assessment to determine staffing capacity, numbers of children on site and ability to deliver remote education.

## Early Years

Following recent announcement the guidance confirms and further clarifies the Government position on Early Years settings. Early years provision should continue to remain open and should continue to allow all children to attend full time or their usual timetable hours. This includes early years registered nurseries and childminders, maintained nursery schools, as well as nursery classes in schools and other pre-reception provision on school sites.

We are aware that some school based nurseries are experiencing staffing anxiety and workforce capacity issues and we have flagged this to the DfE.

## Special schools and specialist post 16 provision

The guidance states that special schools should continue to welcome and encourage pupils to attend full-time where the parent/carer wishes for their child to be able to attend. Pupil level risk assessments, which were used last spring, should not be used to filter children and young people in or out of attendance, but could be helpful to prioritise the provision a child or young person can get if full time provision for all is not possible.

Our suggested advice is that special schools determine their safe capacity based on a setting-wide risk assessment. Special schools should then work with families to identify those children and young people who can safely be onsite; clinically extremely vulnerable children have been advised not to attend school at this time and some parents may want to keep children at home, which should be authorised. If it is not possible to accommodate all those who wish to attend the school should consider alternatives such as a mixture of full and part time provision or rota of provision, with best endeavours to accommodate the wishes of learners and their families.

## Remote Education

The remote education provided should be equivalent in length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school and will include both recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. The amount of remote education provided should be, as a minimum; Key Stage 1: 3 hours a day on average across

the cohort, with less for younger children; Key Stage 2: 4 hours a day; Key Stages 3 and 4: 5 hours a day.

Our suggested advice is that although expectations around remote education have been raised to include live or recorded teaching time, you do not have to provide live streamed lessons if this is not achievable for your school. You can pre-record or make use of the Oak Academy resources. Communication with parents regarding your offer is key. If you would like support or to discuss your approach, please contact your School Effectiveness Partner.

We will also be producing more age related advice and guidance.

### **Children who struggle to access remote education**

It may also be that some pupils who have difficulty engaging in remote education may be considered to be vulnerable children, and therefore eligible to attend provision in person. As outlined in the guidance, this is a decision based on local discretion and the needs of the child and their family, as well as a wide range of other factors.

Our suggested advice is that schools know the circumstances of their families and will be able to assess which children would be considered vulnerable in this way and so can determine this on a case by case basis, alongside supporting families to access remote education.

### **Before and After School Provision/ Wrap-around Care/ Extra-curricular Activities**

DfE expect schools to operate for their normal hours. Where possible, breakfast club and after school provision are encouraged, to help support the children of critical workers. These clubs and activities must only be open for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children.

Schools may also continue to open up or hire out their premises for use by external wraparound childcare providers, such as after-school or holiday clubs, that offer provision to children of critical workers and/ or vulnerable children.

### **Exams**

Schools and colleges can continue with the vocational and technical exams that are due to take place in January, where they judge it right to do so. It is for the school or college to decide whether to put on the exam. If a student is unable to take their assessment this January, they may be able to take the assessment at a later date. In the event that is not possible, DfE arrangements will ensure they are not disadvantaged.

## **Protective Measures/ Risk Assessment**

No changes but we remind you to update and share your risk assessment with staff, governors and parents.

## **School Workforce**

The expectation is that everybody should work from home where possible. School leaders are best placed to determine the workforce that is required in school, taking into account the updated guidance for those staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable. The expectation is that those staff not attending school will work from home where possible.

## **Uniform**

Some schools may feel it is appropriate to relax their uniform policy whilst only certain categories of pupils are attending. This is a decision for school leaders.

## **PE**

Schools can hold PE lessons indoors, including those that involve activities related to team sports, for example practising specific techniques, within their own system of controls. Outdoor activities and sports should be prioritised where possible.